

# Transactions

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER  
2005

TRANSPORTATION NEWS  
FOR THE NINE-COUNTY  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



**A Landmark Takes Shape**

While the debate has been raging over the design and cost of the tower section that will crown the new East Span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, construction has continued apace on the adjoining skyway, which is now 80 percent complete. Shown here are dramatic views of every phase of the skyway building process along with artist renderings of the new East Span and its bicycle/pedestrian path. The striking new landmark is scheduled to open to traffic in 2013.

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**Signed, Sealed, Delivered**

With the existing East Span in the background, the architects of the bridge funding deal gather at the bill signing ceremony in Oakland.

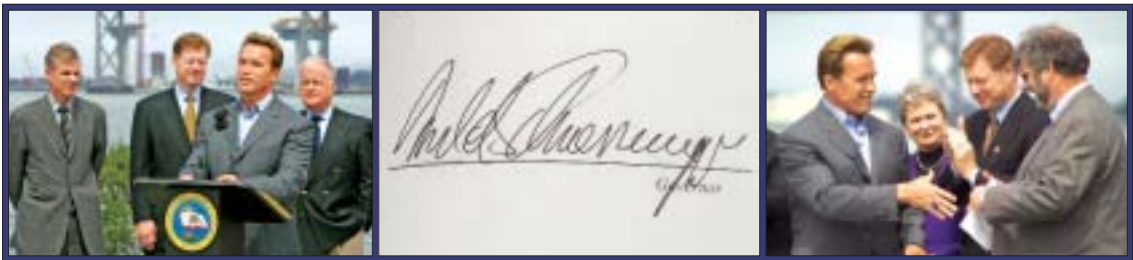
**Left photo:** State Senator Tom Torlakson (at far left, D-Antioch), chair of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, Assemblyman Guy Houston (middle, R-Livermore) and state Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata (at far right, D-Oakland) look on as Governor Schwarzenegger addresses the crowd.

**Right photo:** The governor shakes hands with MTC Chair Jon Rubin (at far right) as Assemblyman Guy Houston and Assemblywoman Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley) look on.



**Funding Agreement Allows East Span Construction to Move Forward**  
DEAL RETAINS DISTINCTIVE DESIGN FOR NEW LANDMARK

At long last, and after nearly a year of delay, the Schwarzenegger Administration and state lawmakers approved a financing plan to complete construction on the new East Span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The governor signed Assembly Bill 144 by Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley) on July 18 at an Oakland location overlooking the bridge. The measure will allow construction to move forward on the landmark single tower, self-anchored suspension (SAS) span that will be the centerpiece of the new East Span.



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, JOHN DECKER

CALTRANS, JOHN HUSEBY

CALTRANS, JOHN HUSEBY

Progress on the tower portion of the bridge stalled in mid-2004 when the lone construction proposal came in over budget, prompting state officials to rethink the design. “The people of the Bay Area need a new bridge and they deserve the design they have chosen and been paying for,” said Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata (D-Oakland), who led the Bay Area delegation in negotiations with the governor. The agreement obligates \$630 million in additional state funds — including \$300 million for the demolition of the old, seismically weak span — toward a \$3.6 billion funding agreement to complete

the Toll Bridge Seismic Retrofit Program. The deal also calls for raising bridge tolls on the Bay Area’s state-owned bridges by \$1 (to \$4 for autos) starting January 1, 2007. “This is an equitable package that balances state funds with local contributions in the form of a toll hike. Most importantly it offers the fastest path to seismic safety,” said Randy Rentschler, MTC’s director of Legislation and Public Affairs. As an urgency measure that passed the Legislature by a two-thirds margin, AB 144 went into immediate effect. The bill assigns broader oversight duties to MTC in its role as the Bay Area Toll

Authority (BATA). One of BATA’s first actions under this new mantle was to release revised bid documents for the SAS portion, with proposals due in six months. To bring the price down and spur more interest among construction firms, BATA agreed to remove the preference for domestic steel and added contractor incentives. A *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial summarized the compromise aptly: “No one likes higher tolls, but \$4 will seem like a bargain if thousands of cars are on a solidly rebuilt Bay Bridge when the next big quake hits the region.” — Karin Betts

## Calendar

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings take place at:  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter  
Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium  
101 Eighth Street, Oakland  
(Across from the Lake Merritt BART station)

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER 11, 2005  
3:30 pm  
Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 12, 2005  
9:30 am  
Bay Area Toll Authority  
Oversight Committee\*  
10 am  
Administration Committee\*  
10:15 am  
Programming and Allocations Committee\*  
12:30 pm  
MTC Advisory Council

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER 14, 2005  
9:30 am  
Planning and Operations Committee\*  
10 am  
Legislation Committee\*

MONDAY  
OCTOBER 17, 2005  
2 pm  
TransLink® Operating Group  
San Francisco Municipal Railway  
401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco  
(tentative)

THURSDAY  
OCTOBER 20, 2005  
9:30 am  
Regional Pedestrian Committee  
MetroCenter, Conference Room 171  
1 pm  
Bicycle Working Group  
MetroCenter, Conference Room 171

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER 21, 2005  
10 am  
Association of Bay Area Governments/  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District/  
MTC Joint Policy Committee\*

MONDAY  
OCTOBER 24, 2005  
1:30 pm  
Partnership Technical Advisory Committee  
MetroCenter, Conference Room 171  
2 pm  
TransLink® Management Group  
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and  
Transportation District, Boardroom at  
the Bridge (Toll Plaza), San Francisco

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 26, 2005  
10 am  
Bay Area Toll Authority\*  
10:15 am  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission\*

## Public Hearings

**Proposed Seismic Toll Increase**

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 12, 2005  
9:30 am  
WEDNESDAY  
NOVEMBER 2, 2005  
1:30 pm

\*Webcast on <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

**Note:** Dates, times and locations of MTC meetings may change. Please confirm by calling 510.817.5757. Agendas, updated meeting schedules and packets for MTC standing committees are posted on MTC’s Web site: <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

## Announcement

**New MTC Phone Numbers**

In August, we consolidated our staff into our MetroCenter headquarters in Oakland, in the process acquiring a new telephone system and new phone numbers for all MTC staff (including employees who staff the Bay Area Toll Authority and the Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways). MTC’s new main phone and fax numbers are listed on the reverse in the mailing address area. Direct phone numbers for individual staffers can be found on MTC’s Web site <www.mtc.ca.gov> — go to the “About” section on the navigation bar, and then click on “Key Staff.”



Earmark Highlights

\$ 58,800,000

Golden Gate Bridge Seismic Retrofit

\$ 56,204,000

New Transbay Terminal, San Francisco

\$ 36,000,000

State Route 4 East upgrade, Contra Costa County

\$ 32,600,000

Highway 101 widening (including the Novato Narrows), Marin and Sonoma Counties

\$ 23,880,000

State Route 12 widening and reconstruction of interchange with Interstate 80/Interstate 680, Napa and Solano Counties

\$ 15,600,000

Interstate 580 — construction of high-occupancy-vehicle lanes and related improvements, Alameda County

\$ 6,400,000

Silicon Valley Transportation Incident Management Center construction, Santa Clara County

\$ 3,971,000

Construction of ferry terminal at Oyster Point, San Mateo County

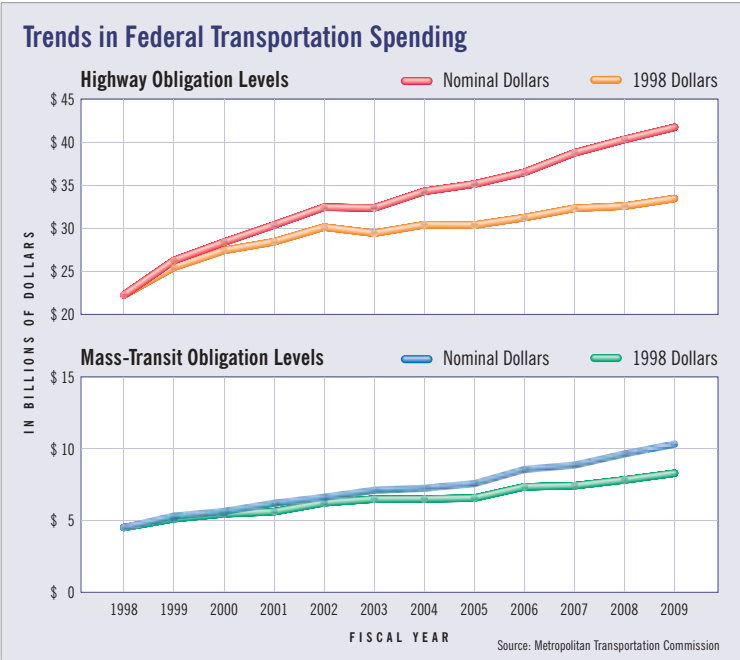
\$ 2,000,000

Interstate 680 — construction of high-occupancy/toll lanes, Alameda County

For a nation on the move, the nearly two-year wait for a new federal transportation program finally paid off this August when President Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. More familiarly known as SAFETEA, the new law establishes several new programs and makes clear Congress' commitment to transportation safety.

But the five-year, \$256 billion package is notable not so much for its innovation as for its preservation — maintaining the emphasis on flexible financing and local planning ushered in by the landmark Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and reaffirmed by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21), which was signed in 1998 (and which, through a series of extensions, provided the template for federal spending long past its September 2003 expiration date).

SAFETEA provides a measure of funding predictability for public works departments, public transit agencies and state departments of transportation across the nation. Much of the money will flow to states and regions via formulas for broad spending categories. But the new law also includes more than



*Inflation has been eroding — and will continue to diminish — the buying power of federal transportation dollars over the course of the 12-year span covered by TEA 21, extensions to TEA 21 and SAFETEA.*

6,000 earmarks for specific high-priority highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian investments, including 116 projects totaling \$734 million for the San Francisco Bay Area.

While on its surface SAFETEA raises annual transportation spending by an average of some 40 percent when compared to TEA 21, when viewed in constant dollars, spending levels outpace inflation by only a modest amount each year. And they don't begin to keep up with the nation's and the Bay

Area's inexorable growth in population and travel.


Still, in light of the current budget climate in Washington, "the amount was about as good as can be expected," in the words of an *Engineering News-Record* editorial. "It is now time to start thinking in serious terms about the future of transportation spending. ...The industry must help find a better way to pay for America's infrastructure needs," the editorial goes on to say.

— John Goodwin & Brenda Kahn

**Bay Area Plays Host To Intelligent Transport Systems Congress**

Fasten your seatbelts — the 12th World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems is coming to San Francisco November 6–10, 2005, and it promises to give an expected 5,000 attendees from around the globe a thrilling glimpse of the future during five action-packed days.

In addition to offering dozens of educational sessions at San Francisco's Moscone Center, conference sponsors are partnering with Caltrans, MTC, UC Berkeley and more than 30 private-sector firms to offer



GENERAL MOTORS

live demonstrations via the Innovative Mobility Showcase at nearby SBC Park and along the streets of San Francisco. Visitors may take a ride in vehicles and buses as they travel through "intelligent" intersections, experience safety systems that help drivers avoid collisions and navigate curves, and try out

advanced dashboard computers that help drivers bypass traffic and find available parking spaces.

Off-site technical tours will allow attendees to view how new technologies already are changing the face of travel in the Bay Area. Destinations include Caltrans' Transportation Management Center and MTC's 511 Traveler Information Center, both located at Caltrans headquarters in Oakland; the San Jose Traffic Management Center; the East Bay Smart Corridor; San Francisco's new Customer Service Center for FasTrak™ (with a visit to the Bay Bridge toll plaza

for a behind-the-scenes look at electronic toll collection in action); and the Concord-based Service Bureau for the TransLink® smart card transit fare-payment system.

**Special Offer:** MTC and Caltrans have worked closely with the organizing committee to secure a special registration offer for public agency staff and officials from across California. Qualifying attendees will enjoy a registration rate of \$500, nearly a 60 percent discount from the normal full rate of \$1,200. The discounted rate is contingent on a minimum of 500 public agency attendees. The special public agency registration form can be downloaded at <[www.mtc.ca.gov/meetings/events/ITS\\_offer.htm](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/meetings/events/ITS_offer.htm)>.

## Commission Actions

### Summer 2005

- Approved a pioneering Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Policy that ties the award of regional funding for eight planned Bay Area transit expansion projects, such as the BART extension to San Jose, to local planning for new housing and employment within a half-mile radius of stations along the extension corridors. The policy sets corridorwide minimum housing levels for new transit lines, with more capital-intensive modes requiring a higher number of housing units. To encourage affordable housing, below-market units will receive a 50-percent bonus toward meeting the corridor housing threshold. The policy also establishes a Station Area Planning Program to help local governments develop "transit villages" where jobs and housing are clustered next to transit stations (see grants below). **MTC Resolution 3434-Revised**
- Awarded \$2.8 million in grants to eight projects in the pilot cycle of the new Station Area Planning Program. A core element of the newly adopted Transit-Oriented Development Policy (see above), Station Area Plans will address the housing requirements, design standards, parking needs and access issues involved in implementing MTC's TOD Policy at the individual transit-station level. Targeted areas include Downtown Santa Rosa, the Menlo Park station along the planned Dumbarton Bridge rail line, and the Santa Clara Transportation Center along the BART-to-San Jose extension. At the same time, the Commission earmarked \$500,000 to provide jurisdictions with expert technical assistance in their TOD Policy implementation efforts.
- Approved nearly \$20 million in grants to eight public transit systems to advance the deployment of real-time transit arrival/departure information. The public will be able to find out when their bus or train will arrive via signage at bus stops and rail stations and other innovative mechanisms. The program is funded with bridge tolls from Regional Measure 2. **MTC Resolution 3708**

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WWW.MTC.CA.GOV

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